

**COUNTY OF FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA**

**Demographic Bulletin**  
**No. 10 \$2.00**

# **1998 Household Survey**

# **Highlights**



Produced by:

**The Department of Systems Management  
for Human Services**

**Research, Analysis and  
Project Services Division**

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**Accuracy of the data from the 1998 Household Survey provided in this report is subject to bias from sampling, processing and under-reporting by certain groups. In reporting these results, the Department of Systems Management for Human Services takes care to reduce bias through rigorous quality control measures and comparison of results to other data sources. It is estimated that the data contained in this report are statistically reliable within 2.0 percentage points.**

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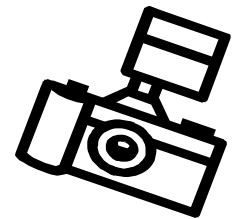
## ***1998 HOUSEHOLD SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS***

The 1998 Household Survey, conducted in January 1998, provides an insight into the characteristics of the household population in Fairfax County. The survey collected information on demographic characteristics (age, race, etc.), economic characteristics (employment status, income, etc.), and commuting characteristics of the members in the households sampled. The survey was sent to a stratified random sample of 10,600 households in the County. It achieved a response rate of 67 percent. Information on the County's group quarters population and homeless population was not collected.

This report provides highlights of the County's household population including age, race, sex, labor force participation, employer, workplace and transportation to work. It also includes highlights of selected social and economic characteristics of the households.

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### **1998 Fairfax County Snapshots**



Total Population	931,452
♦ Household Population	912,229
♦ Group Quarters Population	19,223
Total Households	338,045
♦ Family Households	246,435
♦ Non-Family Households	91,610
Median Age	37
Average Household Size	2.70
Median Household Income (1997)	\$72,000
Median Family Income (1997)	\$84,000

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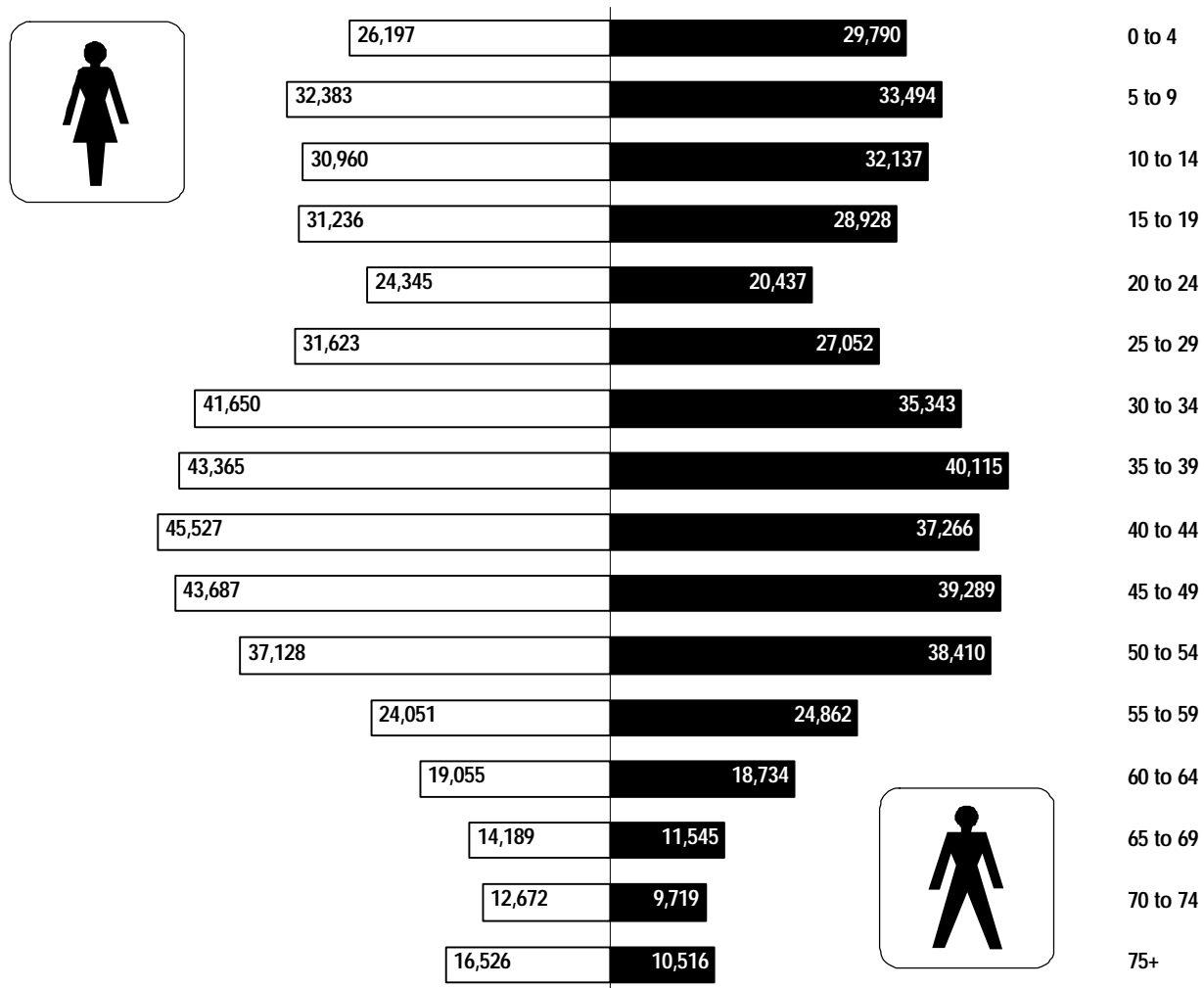
## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

In January 1998, Fairfax County had an estimated total population of 931,452 persons. Of this total population, 97 percent or 912,229 persons lived in housing units such as single family homes, townhouses and apartments. Only 2 percent (19,223) of the population lived in group quarters (e.g. D.C. Correctional Complex at Lorton, Fort Belvoir, nursing homes, college dormitories, etc.). The information provided in this report is for those persons living in housing units and does not include persons residing in group quarters. The households are subdivided into two types: family households and non-family households. Family households are homes in which two or more persons living in the household are related by blood, marriage, or adoption. Non-family households are those which contain one person or several unrelated persons. Family households (246,435) formed a subset of the total households (338,045).

Figure 1 shows the 1998 household population distribution by age and sex. The age groups are categorized into five-year intervals for each gender. The proportion of males to females was more or less equal among the younger groups but showed a disparity among persons 65 years and older, where females tend to outnumber males. In Fairfax County, 49.2 percent of all persons under age 20 were female whereas 58.1 percent of persons age 65 and older were female. The County's age profile was similar to that nationwide. According to the U.S. Bureau of Census, females comprised 48.7 percent of the nation's population under the age of 20 and 58.7 percent of the nation's population age 65 and older in 1998.

Figure 1

### 1998 Household Population Distribution by Age and Sex



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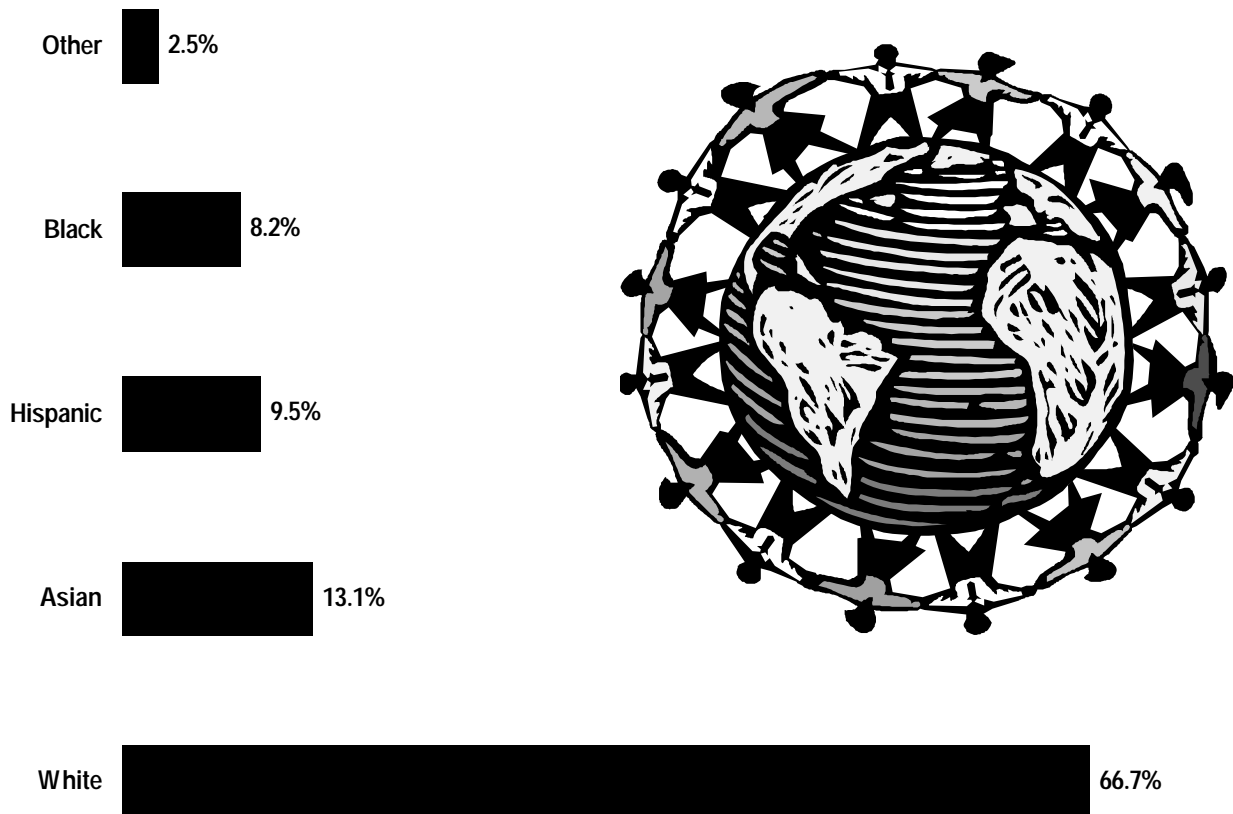
## ***CULTURAL DIVERSITY***

Over the last two decades, Fairfax County's population has become more culturally diverse. Diversity cannot be measured precisely, however there are characteristics that provide some indication of the cultural diversity in Fairfax County. These indicators include race and/or ethnicity and language spoken at home.

The County's population is comprised of persons from many racial and ethnic backgrounds. The racial response categories in the survey were designed for self-selection. The selection categories consisted of White, Black, Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic and Other. Among all household residents, Whites comprised 66.7 percent (Figure 2), Asians 13.1 percent, Hispanics 9.5 percent, Blacks 8.2 percent and 2.5 percent of the population indicated their race or ethnic background as Other. Thus, 33.3 percent of Fairfax County's population were racial or ethnic minorities. This compares to the Census Bureau's estimate that 27.7 percent of the nation's population were racial or ethnic minorities in 1998. The overall racial or ethnic distribution of the nation's population was different than that of the County. Whites comprised 72.3 percent followed by Blacks at 12.1 percent, Hispanics at 11.3 percent, and Asian and Pacific Islanders at 3.6 percent. Asian and Pacific Islanders were the nation's smallest racial minority group, but the largest one in Fairfax County.

Figure 2

### **1998 Household Population by Racial/Ethnic Composition**

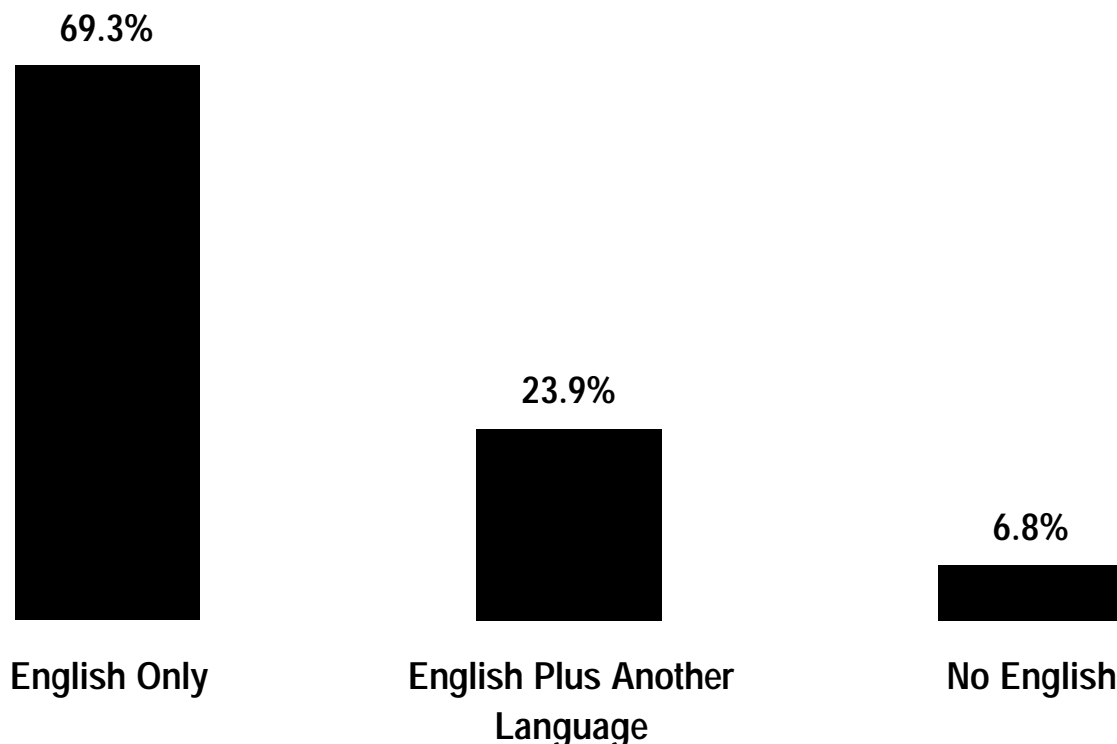


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These racial or ethnic classifications only provide a hazy measure of true cultural diversity because each of these categories contains persons from many different backgrounds. For example, persons designating themselves as White include people of European, African and Mid-Eastern descent. Persons indicating their race as Asian are descendants of immigrants from more than 30 countries. Similarly, persons designating their race as Black include people of African descent as well as Caribbean, Australian, South American and Central American. Persons indicating their race as Hispanic include people from Spain, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Central American and South America. Since 1980, the non-White population in Fairfax County has increased at nearly five times the rate of the total population increase. The most rapid growth has been in Asian and Hispanic populations.

Fairfax County's diverse population has enriched the County with a variety of languages. The number of households for which English is a second language has increased over the last decade. About 70 percent of persons age five and older spoke only English in their homes in 1998. Nearly 24 percent of residents age five and older spoke a combination of English and another language at home and about 7 percent indicated that they only spoke a language other than English at home. However, among those residents who only spoke a language other than English at home, many use English outside of their homes. The racial distribution of persons who spoke a language other than English at home was a quarter were Whites, 5.4 percent were Blacks, 38.4 percent were Asian or Pacific Islanders, 27.2 percent were Hispanics, and 3.2 percent defined their race or ethnic background as Other. The most frequently spoken languages other than English were Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Chinese. Of these languages, Spanish was the most frequently spoken with 10.9 percent of the County's residents speaking this language at home.

**Figure 3**  
**Language Spoken at Home by Persons 5 Years and Over**



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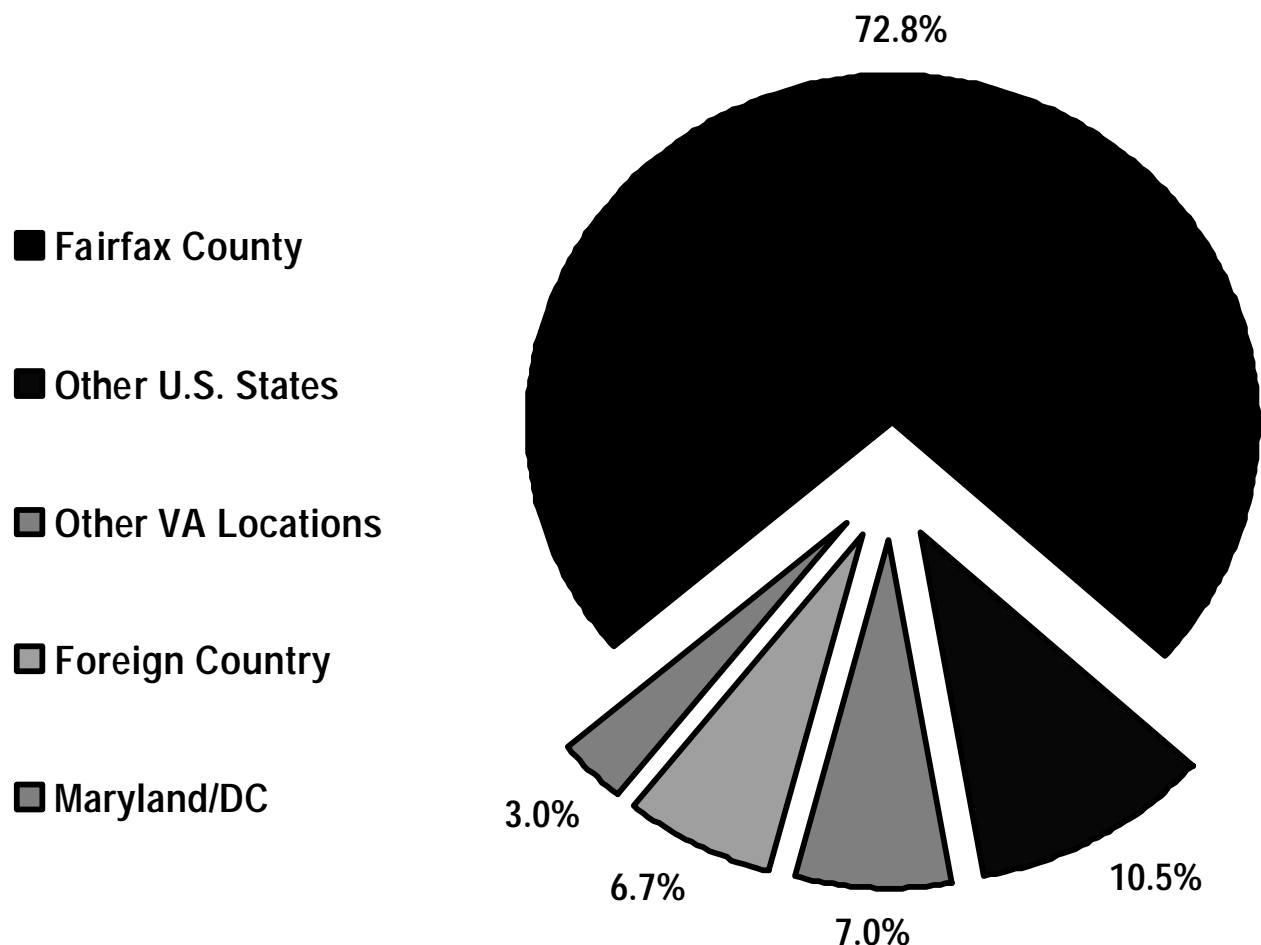
## ***MOBILITY***

Mobility, the movement of residents to and from the County, helps describe the shifts in demographic patterns. Traditionally, economic considerations are major factors, which motivate mobility. The majority of the County's residents have lived in the County for five years or longer. The County's population is not as transient as it was in 1988. As of 1998, 72.8 percent of all residents age five or older had lived in the County for five years or longer (Figure 4). Among those residents who had lived fewer than five years in Fairfax County in 1998, about a fifth (20.2 percent) lived in other Virginia jurisdictions five years earlier and a third lived in a foreign country. The majority of residents who lived abroad five years prior to the survey were immigrants to the United States, however some were United States citizens living abroad and some were citizens of other countries temporarily living in the United States.

Among young adult residents, age 20 to 34 years, nearly half lived some place other than Fairfax County five years prior to 1998 and one out of eleven lived abroad. In contrast, less than 10 percent of all residents age 65 or older lived elsewhere five years prior. Among children, age 5 to 19 years, more than a quarter have lived in Fairfax County fewer than five years and 8.8 percent lived abroad five years prior to 1998.

**Figure 4**

### **Place of Residence Five Years Ago Persons 5 Years and Older**



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## INCOME

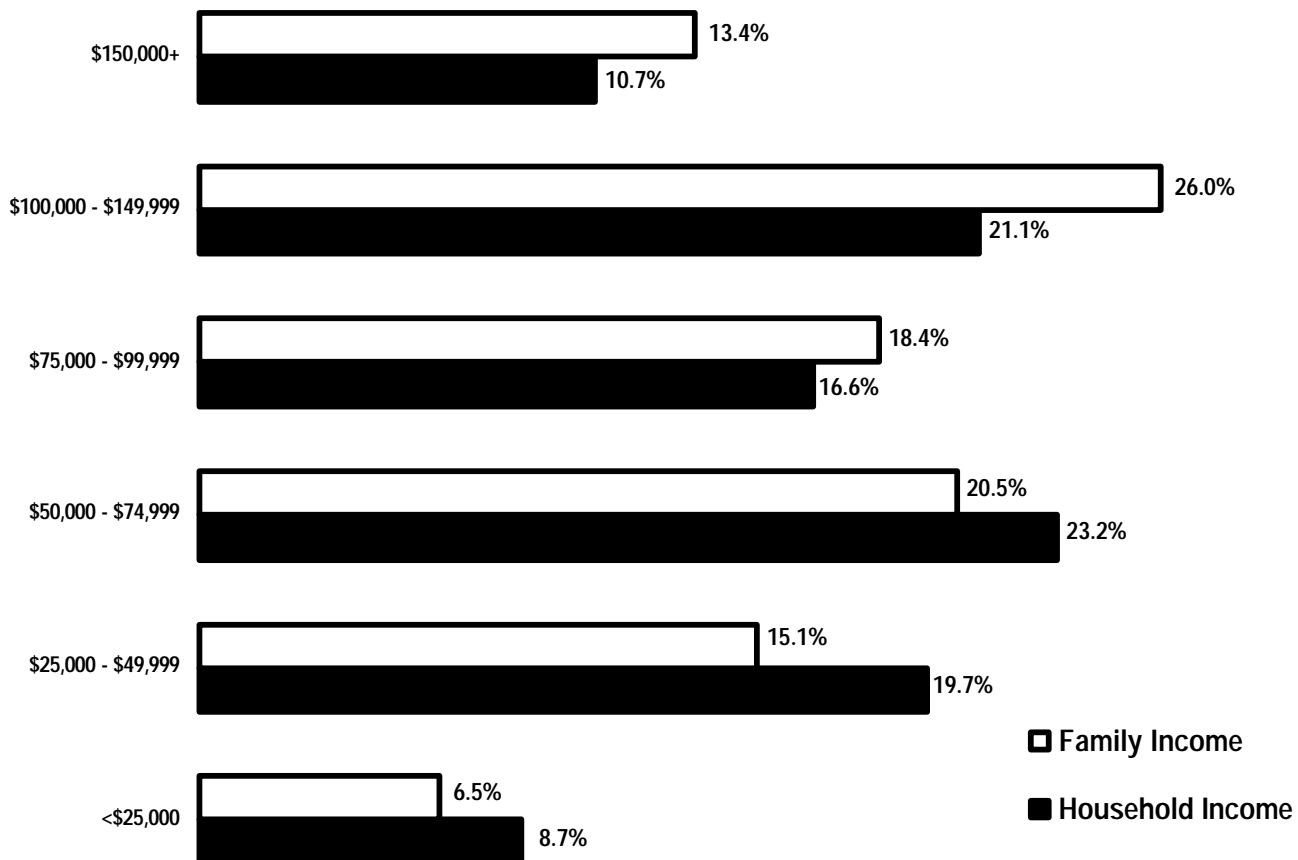
The household and family income measures used in this report are defined as money income. Money income is the amount of income received by each member of the household or family prior to deductions for personal income taxes and other deductions such as Social Security, Medicare, union dues, etc. Capital gains, in-kind income, gifts and inheritances and other lump-sum receipts are not included in these income measures.

Fairfax County is one of the most affluent counties in the nation with very high median household and family incomes. The 1997 median household and family incomes of the County were almost twice that of the nation. Some of the factors contributing to these high income levels are a population that is highly educated, concentrated in their peak earning years and employed in high-paying professional fields such as high-technology and consulting.

In 1997 the Fairfax County median household income was \$72,000 compared to the nation's median household income of \$37,005 and Virginia's median household income of \$42,957. As shown in Figure 5, almost 32 percent of the households in Fairfax County had incomes of \$100,000 or more. Nearly 40 percent of the County's households had incomes of \$50,000 to \$99,999 and only 8.7 percent had incomes of under \$25,000.

Figure 5

### Household and Family Income Distribution 1997



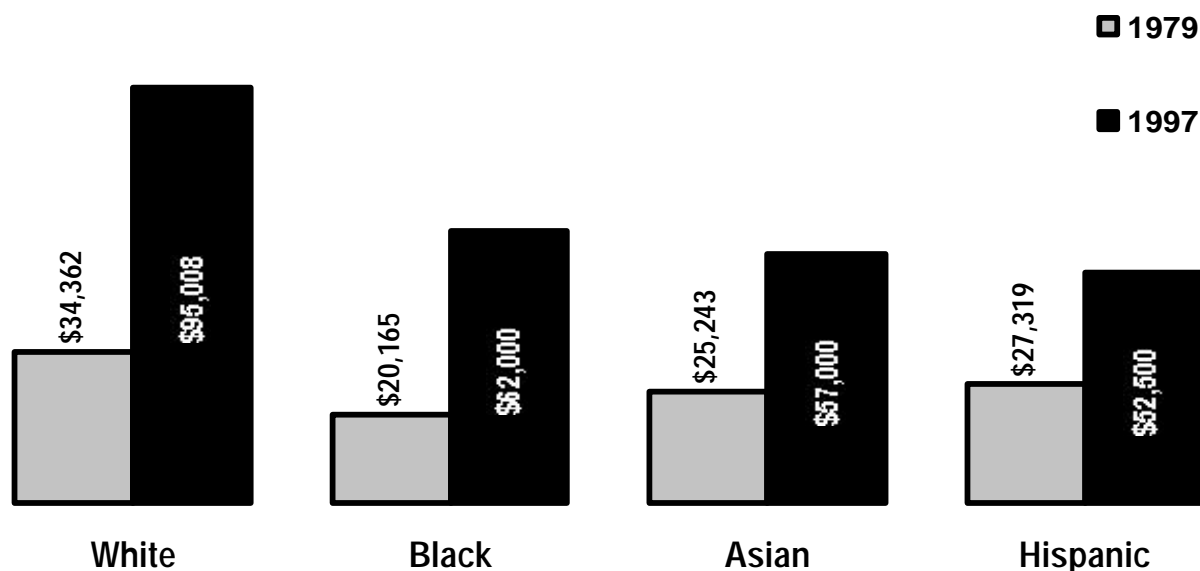


Typically, median household income is lower than median family income because of one-person households. Young adults and retired persons tend to have lower incomes than other adults and one-person households are more likely to contain either a young person under the age of 30 or an elderly person age 60 and older. Family income also tends to be greater because there may be more than one income-earner in the household and family households tend to contain a large proportion of persons in their peak earning years, age 40 to 55. Family households account for nearly three-quarters of all Fairfax County households. In 1997 Fairfax County median family income was \$84,000 with almost 40 percent of families having incomes of \$100,000 or more. About 39 percent of families had incomes of \$50,000 to \$99,999 and 6.5 percent of families had incomes below \$25,000.

Median family income by the race of the household head is shown in Figure 6. The 1980 Decennial Census figures give a comparison to show the increase in median family income by race of the household head. Families with a Black head of household have made the largest gain of 207.5 percent in median family income since 1979 and those with a Hispanic head of household made the smallest gains of 92.2 percent.

Figure 6

### Median Family Income by Race of Household Head



Fairfax County has one of the lowest poverty rates in the nation. The definition of poverty, however, is not adjusted for varying costs of living. In 1997, the Federal poverty guidelines for a family of four were defined as having an income of \$16,050 or less. This Federal poverty level for a family of four was 43.4 percent of the nation's 1997 median household income, but was only 22.3 percent of Fairfax County's 1997 median household income. Nationally, 13.3 percent of the population lived in poverty compared to 3.3 percent in Fairfax County. The 1997 poverty rates by race or ethnicity in Fairfax County are as follows: 1.4 percent of Whites were at or below poverty, 8.2 percent of Blacks, 7.3 percent of Asians and 7.1 percent of Hispanics. According to the Census Bureau, the 1997 national poverty rates by race or ethnicity are: 27.1 percent of Hispanics, 26.5 percent of Blacks, 14.0 percent of Asians and 8.6 percent of Whites.

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## EMPLOYMENT

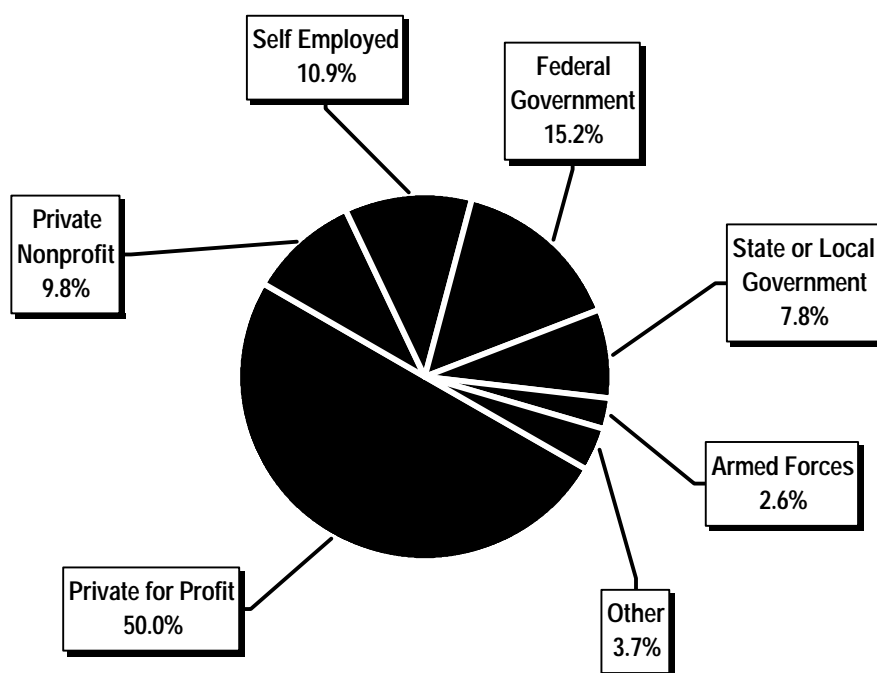
The labor force participation rate is defined as the percent of all persons, age 16 years or older, who are either employed or unemployed but seeking work. The January 1998 Fairfax County labor force participation rate was 78.7 percent compared to the United States labor force participation rate of 67.2 percent. Fairfax County's male labor force participation rate of 85.6 percent was higher than that of the nation at 75 percent. Women in Fairfax County also had a higher labor force participation rate than that nationwide, 73.2 percent compared to 60 percent. The labor force participation rate for men in Fairfax County has held steady since 1950 while the women's participation rate has increased 2.5 times.

As of January 1998 most of the employed residents in Fairfax County worked full-time (84 percent). Nationwide 82.2 percent of all employed residents worked full-time according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Of those Fairfax County residents who worked full-time, 55.1 percent were males and 44.9 percent were females. These percentages were only slightly different than national statistics produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which estimated that 58.4 percent of full-time workers were male and 41.5 percent were female. Of those Fairfax County residents who worked part-time, 30.8 percent were males and over twice as many were females (69.2 percent). Nationwide, 32 percent of all part-time workers were male and 68 percent were female.

Figure 7

### Employers of Fairfax County Residents

Half of Fairfax County's employed residents worked for private for-profit employers in 1998. The Federal Government employed over 15 percent of the County's working residents and about one out of eleven residents were self-employed (10.9 percent). The percent of residents who are self-employed has more than doubled in Fairfax County since 1990 but was similar to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' nationwide estimate of 11 percent. The percent of residents who are self-employed has more than doubled in Fairfax County since 1990 but was similar to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' nationwide estimate of 11 percent. The private not-for-profit sector employed 9.8 percent of working residents, State and Local government employed 7.8 percent and the Armed Forces employed 2.6 percent. Other types of employment arrangements accounted for 3.7 percent. Residents indicating other types of employers included persons who work for several different types of employers and individuals working for foreign entities.

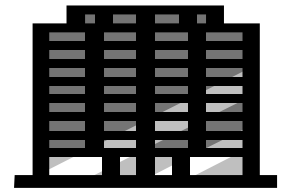
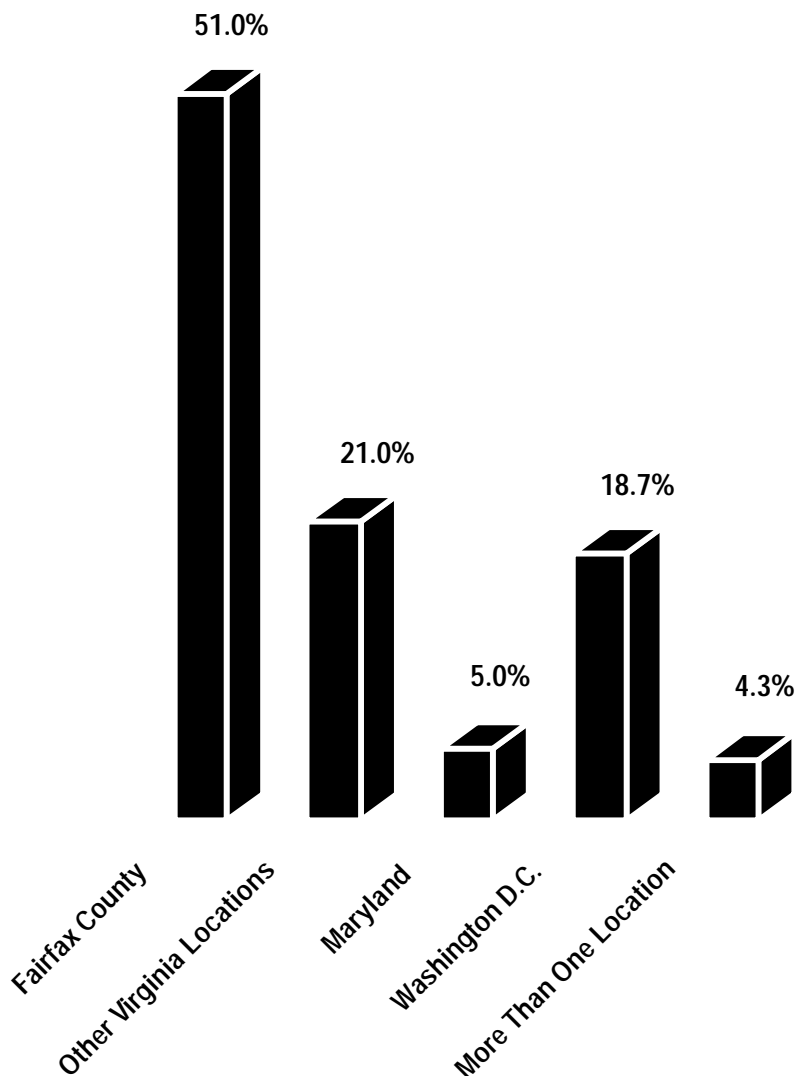


## WORKPLACE

In January 1998, Fairfax County contained over 78 million square feet of office space, over 42 million square feet of retail space and nearly 37 million square feet of industrial space. As a result, Fairfax County is a major employment center and over half of its employed residents chose to work at locations in the County. Almost 19 percent of employed residents worked in Washington, D.C., 21 percent in Virginia locations other than Fairfax County, 5 percent in Maryland and 4.3 percent had other work locations or worked at more than one location. Figure 8 shows the distribution of workplaces among County residents. Among residents with work locations in the County, the largest percent were employed in the Tysons Corners/Vienna area (15.8 percent) and 10.8 percent were employed in the Reston area.

Figure 8

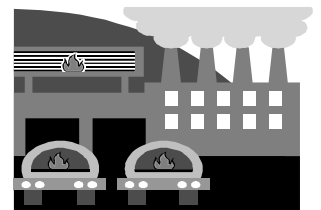
### Distribution of Work Places



78 Million Square Feet of Office Space



42 Million Square Feet of Retail Space



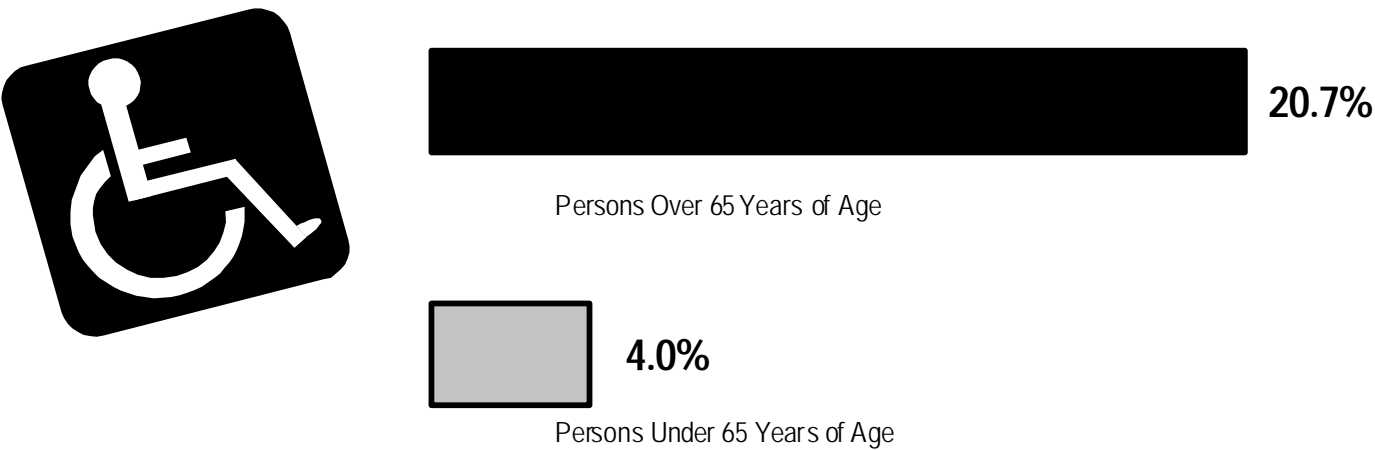
37 Million Square Feet of Industrial Space

The high concentration of employment outside the central city of the metropolitan area has led to large numbers of workers commuting by motor vehicle. The majority of people, who were employed full-time or part-time, drove to work alone for at least a portion of their commute (71.5 percent), about 18 percent commuted to work using a car or van pool, about 7 percent used rail transportation and almost 4 percent used buses. In addition, nearly 3 percent of the County’s employed residents indicated that they worked from home in 1998.

**DISABILITIES**

In Fairfax County 5.1 percent of the population had some form of permanent physical or mental impairment that limited their daily activities. Of the population under 65 years, less than 4 percent had permanent disabilities that limit daily activities while the proportion increased to 20.7 percent for the population age 65 years and older (Figure 9). The number of persons with permanent disabilities will increase in the coming decade as the County’s population ages due to declining mortality rates for seniors and the size of the Baby Boom generation whose members will begin to enter their sixties.

**Figure 9**  
**Persons with Disabilities Rate by Age**



When examining the work status of those with permanent disabilities dramatic differences were found. Among persons age 16 to 54, only 38.3 percent of those with disabilities worked full-time and 21 percent worked part-time compared to persons without disabilities where 72.8 percent worked full-time and 12.5 percent worked part-time. Persons with disabilities, age 16 to 54, were nearly three times more likely to be unemployed and seeking work than those without disabilities. Persons with disabilities were more likely to use mass transportation services than those without disabilities when commuting to their places of employment. Among full and part-time workers with disabilities 63.3 percent drove alone for at least a portion of their commute, 20.8 percent traveled by car or vanpool, 10.4 percent used rail and 8.9 percent used buses.

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## ***HOUSEHOLDS WITH COMPUTERS***

In Fairfax County, nearly 70 percent of all households had personal computers in their homes and 51.3 percent had Internet access. The ownership of personal computers was directly related to household income level. Among households with incomes under \$50,000, fewer than half owned computers. Approximately 74 percent of households with incomes between \$50,000 and \$99,999 had computers at home and nearly 90 percent of households with incomes of \$100,000 or more had computers.

Examining computer ownership in relationship with the race of the household head, 72.8 percent of White households in Fairfax County owned personal computers, 67.9 percent of Asian households, 60.4 percent of Black households, 53.3 percent of Hispanic households and 66.9 percent of households who denoted their race as Other. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 35 percent of the nation's households had a computer in 1997. Among the racial groups nationwide, Asian households had the highest computer ownership rates at 49 percent, followed by White households at 36 percent and Black households at 18 percent. The Bureau of Labor Statistics also stated that households with higher levels of educational attainment were more likely to own computers.



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